

# When it gets too much

**How to recognise it.** Anxiety, panic, confusion and paranoid thoughts, up to perceiving things that are not real; physically a racing heart, nausea, dizziness, and even a collapse is possible. With alcohol or other substances this becomes much stronger. Unpleasant states usually pass.

## What to do.

- Responsive and breathing normally: stay with them, take them somewhere quiet with fresh air, talk calmly, do not leave them alone. If their skin is pale and clammy and their pulse fast, lay them down and raise their legs.
- Unresponsive, breathing normally: call 112, recovery position, check breathing regularly.
- Not breathing or not breathing normally: call 112 and start chest compressions immediately.

**Call 112 immediately** if someone is unconscious or has breathing problems, a seizure or severe pain behind the breastbone, or if you are unsure; with mixed use, call sooner. Tell the emergency services what was taken and give them any leftovers.

**Children and edibles.** If children eat cannabis or sweets containing cannabis, severe poisoning is a risk. Call the poison control centre for North Rhine-Westphalia on 0228 19240, around the clock; if the child's consciousness is impaired or they have breathing problems, call 112 immediately. Do not make the child vomit; keep leftovers and packaging.

**Repeated vomiting.** After long, frequent use, cannabis hyperemesis syndrome can develop: recurring bouts of vomiting, typically eased by hot showers. Have it checked by a doctor. The only effective treatment is to stop using.

**Synthetic cannabinoids and HHC.** Synthetic cannabinoids can be many times stronger than THC and cannot be recognised from the outside; there have been deaths. HHC has been banned since 27 June 2024.

## Key points

- Emergency 112, poison control NRW 0228 19240.
- Do not leave them alone.
- If in doubt, always 112.

Sources: drugcom.de (BIÖG), Drug emergencies; German Red Cross, Emergency number 112 and recovery position; Informationszentrale gegen Vergiftungen Bonn.

More detail: [csc.do/en/prevention/knowledge/when-it-gets-too-much/](https://csc.do/en/prevention/knowledge/when-it-gets-too-much/) ·

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